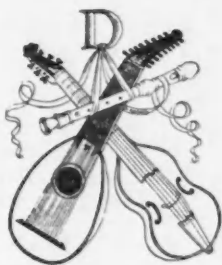


THE CONSORT

JOURNAL OF THE DOLMETSCH FOUNDATION

No. 18

JULY 1961

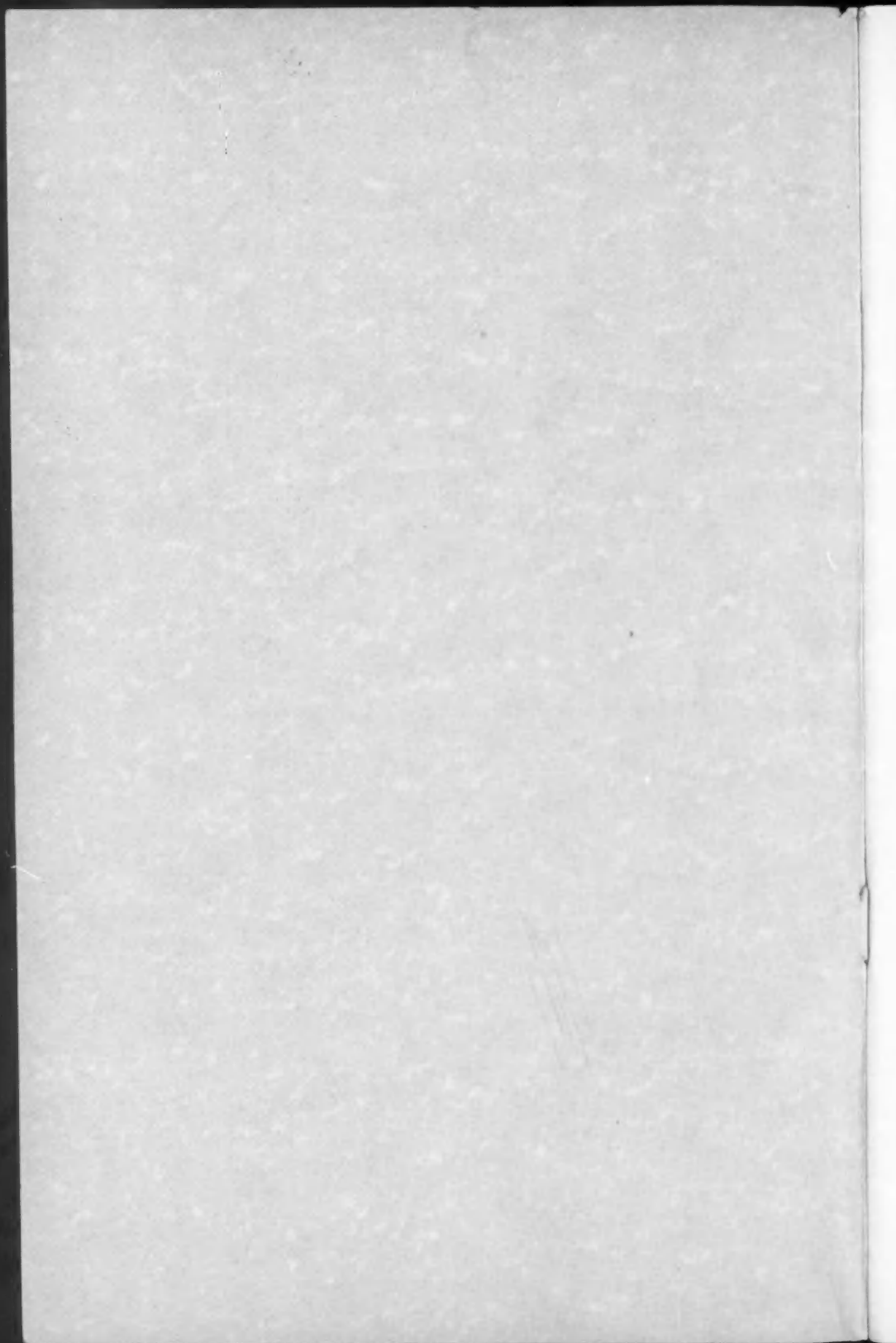


CONTENTS

	PAGE
EDITORIAL R.D.C.N.	57
THE LIFE WORK OF ARNOLD DOLMETSCH (PART I)... .. MABEL DOLMETSCH	63
FRANCESCO BARSANTI WALTER BERGMANN	67
"THE FATHER OF THE PIANOFORTE" JOAN DAVIES	78
GEORG BÖHM (1661-1733) ANGELA EVANS	88
MODERN MUSIC FOR THE CLAVICHORD MICHAEL THOMAS	96

SUPPLEMENT: AN INDEX TO "THE CONSORT" 1929-1959

PUBLISHED ANNUALLY BY THE DOLMETSCH FOUNDATION



THE CONSORT

JOURNAL OF THE DOLMETSCH FOUNDATION

No. 18

JULY, 1961

EDITORIAL

IT HAS LONG been the practice in the musical world to mark a composer's centenary or other notable anniversary with some kind of commemoration. We have heard much of centenaries and their multiples in recent years, and we are likely to encounter even more in the 1960's than in the 1950's. In the case of great composers, who in any case are always with us, the occasion is often graced with a large scale music festival. Performances of every kind take place as a matter of course. Books, articles and broadcast talks are showered upon us, and the avalanche may even include a mass of gramophone records.

We may view all this with mixed feelings, for there is often a tendency on these occasions to revive much inferior material from a composer's bottom shelf and mount it as a first modern performance. As a consequence the object of our veneration may be done a grave disservice. But an excuse is sometimes found to revive music that has been quite unjustifiably neglected. Here is a glorious opportunity to draw attention to some of Tovey's *Interesting Historical Figures*. It is doubtful whether the sudden interest in Joseph Martin Kraus in 1956 would have taken place if he had not had the good fortune to have been born in the same year as Mozart, and to have survived him by only a few months. Yet the music we heard was surely of greater interest and value than would have been the case if those early clavier sonatas with violin or flute accompaniment or the *Galimathias Musicum* by a ten-years-old prodigy had claimed our attention instead in the misplaced zeal of unearthing Mozart the Unknown. Naturally the juvenilia or second-rate works of a major composer are of the utmost interest to the specialist—indeed, they are indispensable, but we must beware of thrusting them on an unsuspecting public as masterpieces.

A centenary can serve a useful purpose if it is to be the excuse for a revival of something really worth while. Yet if a masterwork awaits a revival do we have to let it slumber until the advent of a centenary? If this is so, those of us who are still young will have to wait until the year 2005 before we are allowed to discover that Boccherini wrote more than one minuet invariably played out of context and on the wrong instruments. Even if, for commercial reasons, a revival must normally await a gimmick such as a centenary—for it is no less than a gimmick—there is still no guarantee that when the time finally arrives we will have

one, as Cherubini and Dussekians learnt to their cost in 1960. There has, of course, been some excuse for our neglect of these masters in 1960, for our attention was diverted—and to good purpose—by the much greater stature of Wolf and Mahler. In the latter case one masterpiece was brought to life and given a first performance that is most unlikely to prove the last,⁽¹⁾ and a great corpus of his music was given the long overdue attention it deserves.

Yet, if we have learnt to accept musical anniversaries as an opportunity for reviving interest where it has waned, let us make the best possible use of them and always give honour where honour is due. It is a lamentable thought that 1960 can go down in our memories not only as the year when we honoured Wolf and Mahler and to a lesser extent Alessandro Scarlatti, but also the year when we neglected the quincentenary of one of the greatest composers of the 15th century. On September 27th, 1960, the musical world appears to have been blissfully unaware that on that day 500 years had passed since the death, at Soignies, of Gilles Binchois, whose chansons at their best are even superior to those of his great contemporary Dufay, and who may be considered as one of the musical giants of his time. There is no excuse for our neglect of Binchois. His complete chansons appeared in a collected edition edited by Wolfgang Rehm in 1957. They are now accessible to all who care to investigate them, yet he has remained unknown to the non-specialist, a history book personality whose delightful but not very representative chanson "*Filles à marier*" may be familiar to a few connoisseurs.

Our neglect of Binchois is significant. It throws into relief the immense gulf which separates the musical public from any music written prior to about 1600. It is a gulf to be measured mostly in terms of ignorance and misunderstanding. There is a public suspicion of all things Mediaeval or remote in time and place. Much has been done in recent decades to put matters to rights with the publication of practical performing editions, yet the resulting performances are usually regarded as esoteric and quaint to the outside world, and one wonders whether more could be done to popularise this early music. It is doubtful whether the late editor of Grove V would have got away with the policy of Grove I (1890), which limited its information no farther back than 1450 to avoid "mere archæology." Yet even today, with the exception of church musicians, who will be familiar with the 16th century English choral repertoire, music starts with Monteverdi for the educated and Bach for the illiterate.

(1) We were referring to the incomplete 10th symphony reconstructed for performance by Deryck Cooke. Since going to press we learn with regret that no further performances will be possible as Mahler's widow has banned them.

If we accept that music written before 1450 is not mere archæology but a living force, then we should perform the best of it, and try to stimulate interest in a composer of unqualified greatness, such as Binchois, when the opportunity of a quincentenary presents itself.

Let us not oversimplify the problems to be faced in bringing back to life this enormous corpus of music. They are very formidable. If we encounter a host of problems when interpreting the music of the 17th and 18th centuries, how much greater are our difficulties when faced with a period so much more remote from our own time. In editing and interpreting this music we do not have authorities such as L'Affilard, Hotteterre, Marpurge, Quantz, Mattheson and C. P. E. Bach to fall back on. The scant Mediaeval treatises that exist—of which Tinctoris is, of course, the most important—are concerned more with the theory than the practice of music. For the modern editor and performer all is conjecture. The transcription of Mediaeval notation is itself a specialised task and, when it comes to performance, intuition is often of far greater value than the study of such Mediaeval sources as have come down to us, for the Mediaeval theorists tell us little about the problems of rhythm and tempo that must be faced, and we receive no help from the forbidding notation of the original music. Even the choice of voices and instruments to be used in the performance of this music is left largely to the imagination. We can, of course, study contemporary paintings depicting musical performances, but painting at this time was not always entirely true to life, and any reconstruction is largely guesswork.

Nowadays we hear and read much about the authentic interpretation of old music, but for once the term "authentic" does not apply. There is no authentic interpretation of Mediaeval music. All we can do is experiment. In performing music in several parts we cannot be sure whether to sing each part, or to substitute instruments for some or all of them, or reinforce the vocal line with instrumental accompaniment. We cannot be sure whether we are using the right instruments in any case. We only know that both vocal and instrumental forces were employed for this music, but where singly and where together is another matter. The Mediaeval manuscripts give no indication. By experiment in practical performance we will find a way that effects a happy result. We may have ten good ideas, and one of them may be historically correct, but we can never be sure, after the passage of five centuries, which solution is absolutely authentic. But we must not shirk the risk of error by seeking a way through the forest of intuition and guesswork. If we are afraid to be wrong the whole field of early music will return to

the silence of the museum archive for the rest of all time, for it is doubtful whether we will ever know all the correct answers.

Throughout the ages music has been written to be heard rather than seen. It is only reasonable that we should continue to perform the best of it. There is very little pure "eye" music, and most of what exists is of inferior quality. No one, except perhaps in his cups, would perform Anerio's "A te non basta solo" to a passive audience and expect any kind of response from them, for Anerio's grotesqueries are for score readers, not even for performers, let alone an audience. But this is the exception. We can play Telemann's Lilliputian Chaconne and Brobdignagian Gigue from the Gulliver Suite to a passive audience, and they will probably enjoy the music even though the huge joke remains the exclusive preserve of the two performers. We cannot hope to assimilate Bach's "*Art of Fugue*" entirely through listening to the music in performance, but this should not prevent it being performed. Recourse to the printed page will iron away many of the difficulties a modern audience encounters when listening to Schoenberg, but it would be ridiculous to suggest that the recent music of composers such as Iain Hamilton, Roberto Gerhard or Peter Maxwell Davies should go unheard because the subtleties of total serialism to be found in their works can only be appreciated by minute analysis of their scores. It is just as foolish to suggest that because the subtleties of Mediaeval music are imperfectly known, we should avoid trying to perform it in the most convincing way open to us.

It is sometimes held that literary obscurities are a barrier to the performance of a large corpus of music. But this should certainly not deter us in any music worthy of the name. It is by no means essential to the enjoyment of Dvorak's symphonic poems, for example, for us to have an intimate knowledge of the extraordinary tales by K. J. Erben which inspired them. These works can be subjected to analysis if we so desire, but they can stand on their own as absolute music and may even benefit from this approach. Only bad music will founder unaided by extra-musical embellishments. The advent of radio and the gramophone have proved that even opera can stand on its own without reference to its visual aspects and sung in remote and unintelligible languages. These non-musical factors are obviously desirable in such an art form as opera; they are not essential if the music is of high quality. If a score is incapable of standing by itself but is entirely dependent on other factors it is not great music, even if it makes great opera.

We must be thankful that financial difficulties do not stand in the way of Mediaeval music in the same way that they do in

preventing performances of many a neglected masterpiece of later times. The expense of staging and the overwhelming demands upon the singers have been largely responsible for the virtual oblivion into which the operas of Meyerbeer have fallen, rather than any questionable defect in the music. To sing Meyerbeer demands Wagnerian singers, and Wagnerian singers sing Wagner and have no time for Meyerbeer. Havegal Brian wrote his "Gothic" Symphony in 1919. Only this year, with the aid of considerable financial support, has this masterpiece by one of Britain's greatest and most neglected composers at last come to a first performance. At 85 Havegal Brian has recently completed his 18th symphony and has a vast corpus of other works, many on a very large scale, to his credit. Yet this outstanding composer remains little known, and unknown composers are not a commercial proposition. Hence performances of their music are avoided and our musical life is irreparably impoverished. The same fate has befallen the music of Mediaeval times.

As with Brian in the 20th century, so with Binchois in the 15th we are confronted with the problem of propagating an unfamiliar composer of genius; indeed of propagating a whole epoch of fascinating interest and importance. Why is it that music before 1450 was considered by Sir George Grove to be "mere archæology," and still remains so esoteric and obscure to so many people? How can it be that Binchois, a truly great figure in music, remains so well known to the specialist, yet so obscure to the layman? Dare we suppose that it is caused by factors that have nothing whatever to do with the music at all and not influenced in any way by the many problems we have discussed above? We know very little about the personal lives of composers of late Mediaeval times. We are fortunate to possess an oft reproduced portrait of Dufay and Binchois, which appeared in Martin Le Franc's famous poem of enormous length, "*Le Champion des Dames*" (1441-2), and a few facts about their lives are indeed known, but for the most part the 15th century composer and his predecessors are clouded for us in almost complete obscurity. Such facts as are known are about lives spent in a world so different from our own that they can never become alive and humanised in terms of our own everyday experience. Their interest for us today must rest entirely on their music. The great composers of more recent times can be glamourised. We understand Mozart or Chopin the more from a knowledge of their emotional and stormy lives. We know nothing of an Archbishop Colloredo, or a Georges Sand in the lives of these earlier composers to enliven our interest and increase our understanding of their outlook on life and their problems, and following this, of

their music. The music of the Mediaeval composer must speak for itself. The great truth is that it can do so, but nevertheless a little extra-musical gimmick will help from time to time and the lost opportunities of popularising Binchois in 1960, in his quincentenary year, is a case in point.

This brings us back to where we came in for, after all, musical centenaries are really an excellent idea provided they are used in the right way to stimulate interest in great music of the past that is in danger of being forgotten.

Turning to the present issue of THE CONSORT, I should like to thank the many people who have helped to make its appearance possible, and above all our generous contributors, who have given much of their time to write articles of lasting value, all of which find a warm welcome in our pages.

Mabel Dolmetsch, who last year concluded her "Personal recollections of Arnold Dolmetsch" (now available in book form), starts a new series in this issue dealing with Arnold Dolmetsch's life work, which should make fascinating reading.

Dr. Walter Bergmann, musicologist, editor and performer, and a specialist in 18th century music, last year contributed an account of the music written to commemorate the death of Purcell. This year he moves on a generation to discuss a most unjustly neglected composer, Francesco Barsanti. Dr. Bergmann's article leaves one with a desire to become better acquainted with Barsanti's music.

Angela Evans ensures that Georg Böhm, whose tri-centenary falls this year, will not be overlooked in the way that Binchois was in 1960 and in addition she provides an arresting account of musical conditions in late 17th century Germany.

Joan Davies is a distinguished concert pianist. In writing on Clementi, the father of the modern pianoforte, she is discussing a composer whose music she knows intimately from practical performance. Her contribution is therefore of unique value and we hope it will encourage other pianists to investigate the treasure that lies waiting in his 100 odd sonatas and other piano works, so often overlooked by students and virtuosi alike.

Michael Thomas, a pupil of Dorothy Swainson, is especially qualified to discuss the Clavichord as an instrument with a future as well as a past, for he has commissioned many works from contemporary composers and done much to ensure that the Clavichord and its music remains a living force.

R.D.C.N.

THE LIFE WORK OF ARNOLD DOLMETSCH

BY

MABEL DOLMETSCH

(PART I)

A SURVEY of the life-work accomplished by Arnold Dolmetsch, though but an outline, brings with it a sense of amazement at the scope and diversity of his achievements. His was a bewilderingly versatile nature, even to the point of embarrassment; and no doubt there were times when he might well have envied the more placid lot of the single-track mind.

Despite this strongly marked characteristic, he started his career in this country as a specialist in his chosen art as violinist. Besides occupying with distinction the post of violin master at Dulwich College, he gradually built up an excellent private teaching connection which, at one time, included periodical visits to St. James' Palace, where he had as a pupil a youthful relative of Queen Victoria. He took a vivid interest in his various young pupils, and used to compose charming pieces to suit their individual attainments.

It was when he had reached the age of thirty that the great upheaval came; beginning insidiously enough with the acquisition of a fine and fascinating viola d'amore. This sweet siren among instruments however played the part of a decoy, leading him on to the discovery of a vast musical nirvana, wherein had reposed, undisturbed for centuries, a treasure-trove of beautiful English music.

Desirous of accumulating a repertoire for his viola d'amore, he had gone to the British Museum to search for authentic compositions for this instrument. Far and beyond these, he was confronted with an overwhelming collection of concerted music for the consort viols: namely, the various-sized instruments of the viola da gamba family (i.e. par-dessus, treble, alto, tenor and bass; and eventually double bass).

With his inborn taste and discrimination he instantly recognised the high musical value of these compositions: though others thought that he was mad! For him there were no half measures. He would not have dreamed of such a compromise as the performance of these consorts on violins and 'cellos; but immediately set about procuring the requisite viols.

His first find was a fine six-stringed bass viol by Barak

Norman which, as far as its exterior was concerned, had been admirably restored by the foremost violin makers in England. But alas! for its interior! The director of the firm was under the impression that the viol would be greatly improved by having thick, taut, strings like the members of the violin family. In order therefore to impart to its slender frame the strength to resist this severe tension, he had reinforced the back and front with a thick wooden lining, and had substituted a substantial bass-bar for the original light one. The tone, in consequence, had a dull muted sound, in place of the clear vibrant quality characteristic of a well mounted viol, which renders easily intelligible the interwoven themes in contrapuntal music.

Arnold Dolmetsch, as may well be imagined, had the enterprise and flair to discover several fine viols in their original state; and himself to put them back into playing condition, whilst yet preserving their slender proportions, shallow-curved bridges, fretted fingerboards and thin strings. These features, combined with their system of tuning, considerably favour the overtones, and thus endow the viols with that ethereal charm which produces its full effect in a concert room of moderate size.

Naturally the first viol consorts to be revived were played by himself, with his wife and their gifted daughter Hélène. These therefore consisted of two and three-part Fantasies by such great English masters as Thomas Morley and John Jenkins. As additional viols and players became available other fine consorts were introduced, in four, five and six parts.

At the first "Dolmetsch Concert" which I personally attended I was, I remember, particularly impressed by the profound beauty of a composition for five viols named the *Dovehouse Pavan* by Alfonso Ferrabosco II, admirably suited to the grave rich tones of a full consort of viols. I did not then imagine that I, who had but then recently left "Boarding School," should ever come to play the viol and myself take part in the *Dovehouse Pavan*!

In those days of my youth it was impossible for a young girl to go about for an evening's entertainment unaccompanied by a chaperone. On that occasion my protectrice was Lucy Carr Shaw (sister of George Bernard Shaw).

Other features which stand out in my memory of that exciting evening were firstly a 16th century piece for the virginals named "*Sellenger's Round*" by William Byrd, played on an ancient virginals, whose plump tones responded perfectly to the crisp runs and ornaments that seemed to my heart to ripple like little strings of pearls.



ARNOLD DOLMETSCH PLAYING THE LUTE



MABEL DOLMETSCH PLAYING THE VIOLONE

I was charmed in a different way with a Suite by Marin Marais for the viola da gamba, played with delightful crispness by Hélène. This showed to full advantage the expressive qualities of the viol, in this poetically imaginative music of the French composer of King Louis XIV's time. It also showed me what a beautiful thing the true-viol bowing can be; the suavely supple movements of Hélène's wrist, reminding me of those of a swan's neck.

The concert closed with a dazzling Bach concerto, in which a fine Kirkman harpsichord contributed its full share of colour and brilliance; and after this I went home entranced, murmuring "At last I've heard Bach."

During his frequent visits to the British Museum Arnold Dolmetsch remarked upon the amount of interesting music available for the lute. The revival of the lute, however, presented an even more serious problem than that of the viols. Firstly, genuine ancient lutes were (and are) of great rarity. In England, which country (according to Thomas Mace) once produced the finest lutes, every vestige of these instruments had been destroyed by our progressive ancestors of the eighteenth century. It was therefore to the more conservative countries on the continent that our nineteenth century collectors had to look for surviving specimens.

One day (at the close of a visit to his relatives in France) Arnold was driving to the "Gare du Nord" when his eye was caught by an imposing looking lute, hanging in a shop window. It was, alas! impossible for him to alight, owing to the short time allowed for the departure of the boat train. On his arrival in Dulwich, therefore, he wrote to his brother Albert, asking him to go at once to that shop and *buy* the lute! Albert did as he was bid; but when the instrument arrived it revealed itself merely as a showy fake produced by an enterprising Italian craftsman for selling to tourists, but wholly unplayable!

The next venture in lutes was more successful. A less romantic looking but thoroughly sturdy German lute was bought at an auction and restored to playing order. The knowledge thus gained prompted Arnold Dolmetsch to construct for himself a large and handsome lute of admirable workmanship, with a fine sonorous tone; and for a considerable time he played on it almost exclusively. I loved the sound of it; particularly in those stark austere Scottish tunes from the 16th century Straloch Manuscript. In course of time he acquired several ancient lutes of Italian manufacture, in various sizes, whence we were able to enjoy some consorts of four lutes.

The large amount of lute music amassed by him sorely tempted him to consecrate his time wholly to this most exacting of taskmasters. But this could not be indulged in so freely. Thus he used to remark, humorously, that his only chance of mastering the lute would be to get himself, and his lute, shut up in prison for a year or two!

Although this solution never presented itself, he enjoyed many years in company with his much loved lute. Other lutes of various types were later acquired by him; thus bringing back to England that which had been declared by Thomas Mace to be the finest music in existence.

(To be continued)

FRANCESCO BARSANTI

BY

WALTER BERGMANN

WHEN MATTHESON planned his "Ehren-Pforte" in 1714 he intended to publicise the lives of all important musicians of his time. When the book was published in 1740—we may translate the title into "Triumphal Arch for Musicians"—it comprised the lives of nearly 150 musicians and showed through their life stories the social conditions under which they worked. As Mattheson explained in the preface to the book,⁽²⁾ he thought that people who are interested in music are also interested in the lives of musicians. This is specially true for people who study music of the past. It is therefore a great loss for us that the number was not greater than one hundred and fifty.

For personal reasons I have always been interested in the lives of immigrant musicians of the eighteenth century. Of course the greatest number were the Italians, who swarmed all over Europe and for a long time were in the leading positions in all European countries. Most of them never lost contact with their homeland and returned sooner or later. Some, however, left Italy for good and made their fortune abroad. Francesco Barsanti was one of them. What was his fate?

Our knowledge of Barsanti's life is mainly based on Hawkins' History of Music.⁽³⁾ We can also trace his stay in Scotland from a few notes and letters. After his return to London we would have lost trace of him had it not been for the connection between his daughter and the Burney and Hawkins families. There are also, of course, his compositions.

Hawkins' report deserves to be quoted in full:

"Francesco Barsanti, a native of Lucca, born about the year 1690, studied the civil law in the university of Padua; but, after a short stay there, chose music for his profession. Accordingly he put himself under the tuition of some of the ablest masters in Italy, and having attained to a considerable degree of proficiency in the science of practical composition, took a resolution to settle in England, and came hither with Geminiani, who was also a Luccese, in the year 1714. He was a good performer on the hautboy, and also on the flute; in the former capacity he found employment in the opera band; and in the latter derived considerable advantages by teaching. He published, with a dedication to the Earl of Burlington, Six Solos for a flute, with a thorough-bass, and afterwards Six Solos for a German flute and a bass. He also made into

(1) By permission of the editor, the author has made use of his article on Francesco Barsanti in "The Recorder News," No. 13, Autumn, 1955.

(2) *Grundlagen einer Ehren-Pforte*. Hamburg. 1740. ¶ 15.

(3) Vol. V (1776) p. 371-2.

sonatas for two violins and a bass the first six solos of Geminiani. He continued many years a performer at the opera house; at length, reflecting that there was a prospect of advantage for one of his profession in Scotland, he went thither; and, with greater truth than the same is asserted of David Rizzio may be said to have meliorated the music of that country, by collecting and making basses to a great number of the most popular Scots tunes.

'About the year 1750 Barsanti returned to England, but, being advanced in years, he was glad to be taken into the opera band as a performer on the tenor violin; and in the summer season into that of Vauxhall: at this time he published twelve Concertos for violins, and shortly after, *Sei Antifone*, in which he endeavoured to imitate the style of Palestrina, and the old composers of motets; but from these publications so little profit resulted, that, towards the end of his life, the industry and economy of an excellent wife, whom he had married in Scotland, and the studies and labours of a daughter, whom he had qualified for the profession of a singer, but is now an actress at Covent Garden, were his chief support.

"This circumstance in the character of Miss Barsanti, as also her dutiful regard for her surviving parent, are well known; and, to the honour of the present age, it is here mentioned, that the public are not more disposed to applaud her theatrical merit, than to distinguish by their favour so illustrious an example of filial duty and affection."

Barsanti's compositions and arrangements, listed below, prove Hawkins' statement that he must have been well educated in music. His handwriting "*Il Dono dell' Autore*" on his arrangement of G. B. Sammartini's Op. 6 is firm and sensitive. As an "oboist" in the opera band he probably had to play oboe, recorder and flute. At the time when he arrived in England, the recorder, called by Hawkins in the terminology of the 18th century the flute or common flute, was in high fashion, though the transvers flute had started already to make its way up.

In 1724 Barsanti published six sonatas for treble recorder and basso continuo. They were advertised in that year to be sold by "Mr. Bressan, musical instrument maker, at the Green Door, in Somerset House Yard, in the Strand."⁽⁴⁾ Bressan was the well known maker of the best English recorders. The recorder sonatas were reprinted by Walsh in 1727 (without their dedication of 1724 to "My Lord Riccardo Conte di Burlington e Cork, Barone Clifford . . ."), a sign that they were in demand.

In London he also published six sonatas for the transvers flute, Op. 2 (dedicated to "My Lord Marchese di Blandford"). These sonatas were printed and sold by Ben Cooke, and in 1732 reprinted by Walsh falsely as Barsanti's Op. 3. It seems that Barsanti's edition of twelve trio sonatas for two treble recorders and continuo by Giuseppe Sammartini ("date in luce" by

(4) Kitson: *British Music Publishers*, 1900. p. 224.

Barsanti and dedicated to Baronet Rushout, "Membro di Parlamento") dates from the same time (later reprinted by Walsh for transvers flutes without mentioning Barsanti's name as editor).

From Hawkins' report and the publications and dedications mentioned above it seems that Barsanti was flourishing as player and—very important for the income of an 18th century musician—teacher in the 1720's and early 1730's. It is unknown what drove him to Scotland.

His presence in Edinburgh is proved by a letter he wrote there on December 8th, 1740, to Godfrey Wentworth of Woolley, at York, congratulating him that he stood candidate for York and sending him some music.⁽⁵⁾ In the Edinburgh Musical Society book for the years 1730 to 1749⁽⁶⁾ there is a note under June 10th, 1740: "Ordered that Mr. Barsanti's sallary shall be only twenty five pounds sterling yearly after expiry of his current year," also a note in 1741 that he received this salary for 1741 and 18/6 for mending kettle drums. Entry for 1742: July 16th: "For writing music to order £1 16s. od.," May 1st: "Mr. Barsanti's years sallary £25." 1742, November 22nd: ". . . for his concertos £1 1s. od." 1743: "For his kettle drums £10 10s. od."

During his stay in Scotland a Royal Printing Privilege⁽⁷⁾ was issued for him on June 14th, 1742. He appears in it as "Francis Barsanti," though no domicile is mentioned in it. It stated that Barsanti had "composed several Works, consisting of Vocal and Instrumental Musick, in order to be printed and published" and that he had the Royal licence for the sole printing and publishing of his works for fourteen years. No vocal music by Barsanti, mentioned in the licence, has survived, though we know from the above quoted letter to Godfrey Wentworth that he sent him some songs or arias which were "a little out of the way, the Recitatives being in the enharmonick stile and the first part of the last song, you may take the bass and set him at the top and will bear any way."⁽⁶⁾ The 28 Scottish Folksongs which he published in Edinburgh in 1742 are without words and according to the compass meant to be played and not to be sung. Also in Edinburgh he published his Op. 3: ten concerti grossi.

The list of subscribers to Opus 3 is dominated by Scottish names. Nearly all the Scottish names have disappeared from the list of subscribers to Barsanti's next Opus, the "Nove Overture a

5. Historical Manuscript Commission Publications. I am indebted to Dr. Malcolm, Librarian of the Signet Library in Edinburgh, for this information.

(6) I owe this information to Miss Ruth Angus in Edinburgh.

(7) Reprinted in Eulenburg's *Miniature Scores* 766-7.

Quattro." The print of this work does not contain the name of the publisher nor the date of publication; according to the British Museum catalogue it was 1745. It seems that the Scottish/English war of 1745 had taken a heavy toll of Barsanti's clientele or at least on their interest in music. This war may also have been the reason for his return to London.

Barsanti's marriage to a Scotswoman is confirmed in the diaries of Frances Burney ⁽⁸⁾ as well as Hawkins' daughter, Laetitia. ⁽⁹⁾ The latter speaks of Barsanti as "a little old Lucchese," a humble musician, whose "broken English" she could not understand, and of his wife as "the big woman." Thus, it seems that Barsanti was of small stature. The daughter Jenny was a friend of Burney's as well as Hawkins and was helped by both to make a way as a singer and afterwards as an actress. It is the more astonishing that Barsanti's name does not appear at all in Burney's own copy of Hawkins' *History of Music*, though Burney is one of the subscribers to Barsanti's *Opus 5* "Sei Antifone." Burney's own copy of Hawkins' *History* is in the British Museum, with marginal notes by Burney. Where Hawkins writes that Barsanti had qualified his daughter as a singer there is Burney's pencil note: "Another damned lie." I had always been puzzled by this note until I discovered that it was Burney himself who had taught Miss Barsanti singing. She was even the principal singer in his anthem for the Doctor Degree in Oxford in 1769. However, Miss Barsanti lost her voice as a singer and trained now for the stage. Dr. Burney recommended her in 1771 to Garrick at Drury Lane, though not successfully. According to her contemporary, George Colman the Younger, she was "by far the most distinguished of the actresses of her time." ⁽¹⁰⁾ In 1777 she married Leslie Lister, who died two years later, and afterwards Mr. Daly, manager of the Dublin Theatre. In Dublin "either her voice returned or standards were not so high for there are many records of her vocal efforts," ⁽¹¹⁾ also of the new fashion in petticoats she introduced which were later known as "Barsanti petticoats." ⁽⁹⁾

The "distressed circumstances" in which Barsanti lived after his return to England and of which Hawkins wrote are confirmed by the above mentioned diaries. He now played the viola in a band. When he came back from Scotland he must have been nearly 60 years old. It must be presumed that he had lost his

(8) *The Early Diary of Frances Burney 1768-1778*, Ed. A. R. Ellis. London 1889.

(9) Laetitia-Matilda Hawkins: *Anecdotes, Biographical Sketches and Memoirs*. Vol. I. London 1822. pages 215-224.

(10) George Colman, the younger: *Random Records*, Vol. 1, London, 1830, p. 243.

(11) H. S. Corran in *Quarterly Bulletin of the Irish Georgian Society*, No. 2. April, 1958.

teeth and therefore could no longer play the flute or the oboe; the recorder—the other instrument an oboist of the first half of the 18th century had to master, and which could be played without teeth—was already out of fashion. Thus Barsanti had not only lost his former position as oboist, but surely also the pupils of the aristocracy—the main source of income for a musician of his time. He was not famous, not prolific and not young enough (in age and fashion) to live by his compositions. Nor could his arrangements of Geminiani's violin sonatas Op. 1 Nos. 7-12 (not, as Hawkins wrote, Nos. 1-6) as trios sonatas and Giovanni Battista Sammartini's *Notturmi*, Op. 6 as *concerti grossi* have brought him much money, especially as Walsh reprinted the former without mentioning Barsanti's name. Moreover Geminiani made his own trio arrangements of the same sonatas a few years later (1757). (These arrangements by Geminiani himself are very interesting: he incorporates the ornamentation, actually recomposing the sonatas completely.)

The number of subscribers to Barsanti's own compositions dropped from 139 for Op. 3 (1743) to 119 for Op. 4 (1745) and 82 for Op. 5. (Among the 82 were Burney, Hawkins and Walter Scott). The dedications also give a hint of charity received. Op. 5 is dedicated to Lady Catherine Charteris for "many obligations," Op. 6 to Lady Dundas "as a small Testimony of Gratitude."

We do not know whether Barsanti received any help or assistance from his fellow countrymen: Geminiani and Giuseppe Sammartini. The latter was probably dead when Barsanti returned from Scotland. Geminiani was then in Paris. When he returned to London he was poor, old, frustrated, gambling in pictures and absorbed in fantastic musical theories—probably not a very good friend. The diaries of Miss Burney and Miss Hawkins refer repeatedly to the Barsanti family's poverty. According to them they were so poor that Jenny had to make her own dresses, even those for the stage.

Barsanti reached an old age. According to Miss Hawkins he had a paralytic seizure while at dinner on the same day that his daughter first appeared in "The Funeral" by Richard Steele. It was her debut at Covent Garden, which took place on the opening of the 1772/3 season.⁽¹⁰⁾ She adds that it was a sore struggle for her to act at all that night. We can presume that Barsanti, then 82 years old, did not survive the stroke for long.

As mentioned above, the name of Barsanti does not appear in Burney's *History of Music*, the fourth volume of which appeared in 1789, seventeen years after Barsanti's death. As instrumentalist he obviously had not left any mark on posterity like Giuseppe Sammartini, who introduced a new sonority on

the oboe, or Geminiani, whose meteoric career as violin wizard was never forgotten. But one could expect to find the name of Barsanti as composer as well as the other two. His works are definitely not inferior to those of Giuseppe Sammartini, who is highly praised by Burney, and if not as intense as Geminiani's, no less competent and, in their way, equally individual. For Burney, however, in 1789 they were surely outdated; they belonged to the past. The baroque period was just dying, the classical period was on the march—Mozart died in 1791—concerti grossi were replaced by symphonies, trio sonatas by string quartets. We in 1961 think differently. We are not partial, we accept the qualities of the baroque period as well as those of the classical. We judge composers from within their own mind, period, works, and we rather appreciate than condemn the differences between styles.

Barsanti entered the gallery of composers with a first-rate work: his recorder sonatas. They not only show unusual knowledge of the recorder, as one would expect from a master of that instrument, but also high musical imagination. As musical creations, they are not inferior to any other recorder sonatas, including Handel's; technically, with their refined original phrasing they are better. The concerti grossi have recently been quite rightly praised.⁽¹²⁾ The following examples show Barsanti's complete mastery of his material: the sound harmonisation of the Scotch tunes, the amusing contrapuntal writing in Op. 4, No. 1, and the blend of Palestrina counterpoint with good old English harmonisation in his church music (Op. 5, No. 3). The recorder sonatas Op. 1, Nos. 1, 3 and 5, have been republished by Schott's; the third movement of the sonata No. 5 shows Barsanti's melodic and harmonic gifts at their best. Two of the concerti grossi have been reprinted in miniature score by Eulenburg (Nos. 776/7), Op. 3, Nos. 4 and 10. Like all of Op. 3, they are happy and most competently composed works. The four-part canon is being printed here for the first time. I found it in MS. on the back cover of a MS. of Gesualdo's madrigals in the British Museum.

Whether Barsanti's merits as composer are recognised in our time depends on the interest we take in good 18th century music. Does it matter? What is beautiful is beautiful in itself.

(12) Arthur Hutchings: *The Baroque Concerto*, London, 1961. p. 323-4.

Slow

O Waly, wa-ly up the bank, and waly, waly down the brae,
And unly, wa-ly you burnside, where I and my love went to gae.

(p legato)

I leand my back unto an aik, I thought it was a trusty tree, but first it

bow'd and syne it brak, sae my true love — did lightly me.

Waly, Waly. No. 10 of *A Collection of Old Scots Tunes*. Original in G.
Figured bass realised by Walter Bergmann. The original is without words.

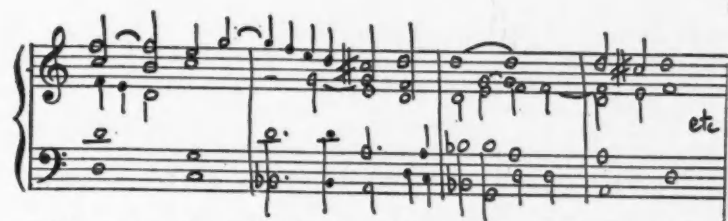
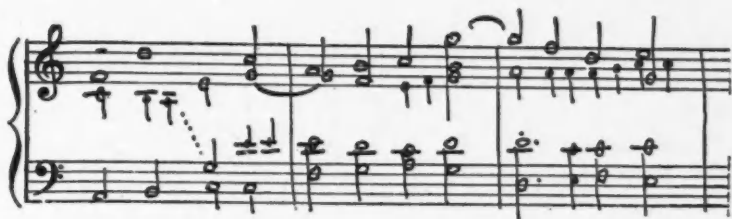
Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Basso

Prima Overture, Op. 4 No. 1. Allegro Bars 21-24. The movement is called *Richmond Ball* and based on the English Country Dance of the same Name:—



Miserere nobis. Bars 79-88 from Antifona III FERIA Sexta in Parasieve for 5 voices, Op. 5, No. 3.

1 Hap- py is the man — that find-eth, that find-eth wis - dom
 2 and the man, and the man that get-teth un-der-stand-ing. Hap-
 3 — py, hap-py is the man that find-eth, that find-eth wis - - dom
 4 and the man that get-teth un-der-stand-ing, un-der-stand-ing.

Canon for four voices

LIST OF BARSANTI'S WORKS

I. ORIGINAL COMPOSITIONS

- Op. 1 Six sonatas for treble recorder or violin and basso continuo.
"Sonate a Flauto, o Violino Solo con Basso, per Violone, o Cembalo."
 No opus number, no date, no publisher. A later edition by Walsh and Hare in 1727 omits the dedication to Lord Cork which is dated 1724. The sonatas are unusually refined and well phrased.
- Op. 2 Six sonatas for flute and basso continuo.
"VI Sonate per la traversiera o german flute, con basso per violone o cembalo."
 London. Ben Cooke. The dedication to the Marquis of Blandford gives as date 12.vi.1728. The set was reprinted (c. 1732) as opera terza by Walsh under the title *"Solos for a German Flute, a Hoboy or Violin with a Thorough Bass for the Harpsicord (sic) or Bass Violin."*
- Op. 3 Ten "Concerti Grossi": Five for two horns, timpani, strings and basso continuo; five for two oboes, one trumpet, timpani, strings and basso continuo.
"Sold by the Author, at Edinburgh." No date (probably 1743). The royal privilege is printed before the tromba part. The printing privilege as well as the list of subscribers is reproduced in the Eulenburg miniature scores. The work is dedicated to Lord Elcho. Among the subscribers are "Dr. Pepusch" and "Sigr. Fran. Maria Veracini."
- Op. 4 Nine overtures for strings and basso continuo.
"Nove Overture a Quattro, Due Violini, Viola e Basso."
 The work is dedicated to the Bavarian ambassador to England, "Francesco Zaverio, Conte d'Haslang." No publisher, no date (c. 1745). The work consists of nine symphonies in three movements for strings and continuo. The four part writing is so excellent that the continuo can be omitted. The writing for the viola is remarkable, allowing more interest for it than similar compositions of the time. The second movements of Nos. 1, 6 and 9 have titles in the bass part: *Richmond Ball, To you fair Ladyes, Countrey Bumkin.*
- Op. 5 Six motets for five part choir (without basso continuo).
"Sei Antifone."
 Welker. London. No date (c. 1750).

- Op. 6 Six trio sonatas for two violins and basso continuo.
London. 1769.
The trio sonatas are written in a transitory pre-classical style, "affettuoso."
- No Opus Canon "*Happy is the man that findeth wisdom.*"
MS in the Royal College of Music library in the British Museum, No. 208. Folio 77b.

2. ARRANGEMENTS

- A "*A Collection of Old Scots Tunes with the Bass for Violoncello or Harpsichord*"
The collection contains 28 tunes, all of them marked "slow." Printed by Alexander Baillie in Edinburgh, 1742⁽¹³⁾. George Farmer ⁽¹⁴⁾ wrote about this collection: "... it is a commendable work, as one might reasonably expect from a composer in his ability, and there is actually a minimum of embellishment in his work, which is far different from the effects of his fellow countrymen later." A passage in the composer's preface is worth mentioning: "I applied myself to do Justice to those ancient Compositions, by a proper and natural Bass to each Tune, with the strictest regard to the Tune itself, and without any alteration of the Tune to accommodate it to the Bass."
- B Twelve trio sonatas by Giuseppe Sammartini for two treble recorders or violins and basso continuo.
"*Dodici Sonate a Tre cioè due Flauti o Violini e Basso di Giuseppe St. Martino date in Luce da Francesco Barsanti.*"
No publisher, no date.
- C Concerti grossi arranged from Notturmi Op. 6 by Giovanni Battista Sammartini.
"*Concerti grossi con due Violini Viola e Violoncello obbligati con due altri Violini e Basso di ripieno. Opera sesta . . . Questi concerti sono composti da diversi notturni del St. Martini da Francesco Barsanti.*"
Walsh. London. 1757.
The copy in the British Museum (h.57.e) has the handwritten number 2 and the note "Il Dono dell' Autore," Barsanti's only autograph in existence as far as I know.
- D Six sonatas for violin and basso continuo by Francesco Geminiani (Op. 1, Nos. 7-12) arranged as trio sonatas for two violins and basso continuo.
Walsh & Hare. London. c. 1733.

(13) Kitson. *ib.* p.178.(14) Henry George Farmer: *A History of Music in Scotland*, London, 1947. p. 253.

"THE FATHER OF THE PIANOFORTE"

BY

JOAN DAVIES

TO ME, Muzio Clementi has always seemed, in truth, the Father of the Pianoforte. Not only did he alter the style of performance on the keyboard quite completely, but eventually as a maker of pianos, he changed the instrument itself by his practical suggestions. He consolidated the form of the Piano Sonata, expanding it to three movements from Scarlatti's miniature Sonatas in one movement, and his influence can be traced even to the present day.

Until he appeared, the early piano was still treated as a rather inferior harpsichord and the performer had not developed the techniques for making colours with the fingers, instead of altering the instrumental colour with change of registration.

Clementi's approach was that of the modern virtuosi, who, if they stopped to think, would find that so many of their wonderful textures and agilities of various kinds, all hark back to the virile Italian composer and virtuoso, Muzio Clementi. In his own time he was acclaimed as a great technician, teacher and composer, and the inscription that his contemporaries had engraved on his tombstone in the Cloisters of Westminster Abbey gives the title to this article. ⁽¹⁾ The wording is as follows:

(1) Incidentally, I went to Westminster Abbey in order to obtain this, to me, fascinating and personal information, because in the recesses of my mind was an idea that I had read at some time (I knew not where) that Clementi was buried there. I arrived and there was no official by the door, so I paced up and down this vast, venerable and wildly exciting monument to history, and personally examined every single memorial and plaque on the walls, or tomb built out from the walls, and every single paving stone and gravestone on the ground in the Abbey itself, including those in the Royal Chapels, even round Edward the Confessor's tomb. As there was no sign of Muzio Clementi, I asked at least three vergers, none of whom knew where he was, and all swore that Clementi was not buried there. I repeated this procedure at least four or five times, with the same result. Eventually I bethought me of the Abbey Bookshop outside and went and enquired for a book of "Musicians Buried in the Abbey." There was none. However, they produced a new and expanded edition of the Abbey Guide, where, under "C," Clementi was noted as being buried in the Cloisters! I repeated my earlier efforts now in the Cloisters, examining every memorial and plaque on the walls and every paving-stone and gravestone under foot, and found the object of my search on the far side.

I staggered home and later opened my Grove's Dictionary of Music, where it told me quite clearly and in the most concise words that Clementi was buried in the Cloisters of Westminster Abbey!

MUZIO CLEMENTI
CALLED
THE FATHER OF THE PIANOFORTE
HIS FAME AS A MUSICIAN
AND COMPOSER
ACKNOWLEDGED THROUGHOUT EUROPE
PROCURED HIM THE HONOUR
OF A PUBLIC INTERMENT
IN THIS CLOISTER
BORN AT ROME 1752
DIED AT EVESHAM 1832

He lies in the company of two musicians, one of whom, Johann Peter Salamon (b. 1745-1815), brought Haydn to England in 1791 and 1794.

However, he was a great deal more than a technician, even though his technical development for his time was staggering.

He was also a magnificent musician and some of the passages in his Piano Sonatas that I shall quote will, I hope, underline this fact.

It has been noted in various places that Mozart, in a letter to his father, wrote in a rather annihilating fashion that Clementi had "not the least interpretation, nor taste—much less feeling." This is rather surprising when one thinks that Mozart then used a version of the first subject of this same tasteless person's Sonata in B flat, Op. 47, No. 2, as the opening of his own Overture to "The Magic Flute." Here is the start of the Sonata:



Here is also a phrase from the exquisite slow movement from the Sonata in F sharp minor, Op. 26, No. 2:

Lento e patetico



This has a depth of feeling; in fact, an almost religious emotion akin to J. S. Bach, which creates an immensely noble effect—far from the vapid and superficial creature that many of us have created for ourselves from nursery days, when the simple notes of the sonatinas were learned in pain and grief and with very little sense!

As a contrast, the last movement of this Sonata has a charm, humour and grace, showing another facet of this remarkable man's personality.

Another major work of an entirely different character is Op. 50, No. 3, in G minor: the *Didone Abbandonata*, which opens with the *Scena Tragica*—a title that broods over the whole work, and a structure that uses harmonies in a tortured and dramatic fashion to such a degree, that it could easily have been written a century later. It is a real prophecy of romantic tragedy and drama, more suited to the late 19th century, and the open 7ths and 9ths in the last movement can be found in abundance in the 20th century; in fact, in these days they are often used instead of the open octave.

The markings of this last movement also appear to be before their time, as it is headed "*Allegro agitato e con disperazione*"—a very unexpected direction at this time of day.

This thought brings me back to the difference in technical approach of the average players of the early piano from that of today. The technique of individuality of the fingers which was demanded by the harpsichord was, of course, a necessity on the



(Reproduced by courtesy of Chappell & Co. Ltd.)

Wm. F. Thackeray and C. W. C. Thackeray
Dear Coleridge

Vienna Sept 22. 1807.

By a little management, and without committing myself, I have at last made a complete conquest of that haughty Beauty of the town; She first began at public places to join Mr. and consort with me; I think of course I took care not to discourage; then she came from Milner Street, till meeting him by chance one day in the street, then she came to my house; I have now seen her this long while! — Upon which I save him my address. Two days after I find on my table his card, signed by himself, from the said, Dennyman of his lovely form. This is the day, I think, I then days after that, he calls again, I find on it however. Concerning then the mutual exchange of such a meeting! I took pretty good care to improve it to advantage; Dennyman as soon as decency would allow, after promising very handsomely, one of his conversations, — the you engaged with my publisher in London? — He, says he, — I have not. — I like this you a long all my heart — Done — What have you done? — I have done nothing.

all my heart — Done — What have you ready? — 5000 lbs. for a long
— I don't, I agreed with him to take in M. L. These Quarters,
St. James's, an over, a concert for the Victim which is been
sifted, and which, at my request, he will adapt for the Birmingham
with 2 without admission days, and a concert for the Birmingham.
for all which we are to pay him two hundred pounds admission.
The property however is only for the British Dominions. To-
day sets off — Consider for London this Victim, and he will bring
over to you 2 or 3 of the mentioned articles. Remember that the
Victim's concert he will adapt himself and send it to you as he can.
The Quarters &c: you may get Quarters or some other very clever
fellow to adapt for the 2 — Take the Quarters and the Quarters
are wonderfully fine, so that I think I have made a very good
beginning. What do you think? — I have likewise engaged him
to compose 2 concerts and a concert for the Victim, which he is
to deliver to our house for sixty pounds admission (which I have asked
for London, not Guineas). I. but he has promised to treat with all
admission as one but one for the British Dominions. In proportion as you

LETTER FROM CLEMENTI TO HIS PARTNER, F. W. COLLARD
(Reproduced by courtesy of Chappell & Co. Ltd.)



SIGN HUNG OUTSIDE LONGMAN & BRODERIP
IN CHEAPSIDE

(Reproduced by courtesy of Chappell & Co. Ltd.)

piano, but in a different degree. The harpsichordist required extreme evenness of touch, but the pianist, as well as requiring this evenness, needed also a calculated *unevenness* to accent and delineate a phrase—in other words, each note called for a different pressure, either a controlled increase for a crescendo, or a controlled decrease for a diminuendo. This requirement is so obvious to our modern ears that we do it as a matter of course, and without even thinking at all, but in Clementi's time the phrasing was still thought of in the terms of the harpsichord—in other words, in blocks of either piano or forte, as the colours had always been made by the different types of jacks.

Clementi, however, was that strange thing, a genius of a new instrument. As in our own days, the manipulators of tape recorders appear to have a different type of brain, so Clementi approached the *Sostenuto Piano* with an unparalleled enthusiasm, and seemed to exult in sheer physical joy in new shapes and masses of sound.

The enthusiasm with which he extended these new sounds and taught them to his admiring pupils, emerged in the development of his famous pupil, John Field. He, in his turn, carried on this wonderful new, colourful doctrine, and produced the new form of the Nocturne, which in its turn altered the course of piano playing by infecting Chopin, who in *his* turn, changed the outlook, technique and musicianship of all pianists.

From the technician's point of view, Clementi was the *Virtuoso par excellence*, and his marvellous set of studies, which we all know so well: "*Gradus ad Parnassum*," should still be the foundation of all pianistic ability, and in Italy, are at the present time used more than any other course of study. In this country they have temporarily gone out of fashion, partly due to the aforesaid nursery tears. More is the pity, for any student who has worked, analysed and enjoyed "*Gradus ad Parnassum*" will have a complete technique of the keyboard with which to indulge any musical thought or to create any work spontaneously.

Of course, the most famous of Clementi's technical inventions were his double notes at speed—particularly 3rds and 6ths, and his octaves and broken octaves were used in a more scintillating form than ever before.

Beethoven was one of the composers who were fascinated by these patterns and used them extensively in many of his works—the Coda of his Third Piano Concerto in C minor being a shining example of dazzling broken octaves.

At this point I would like to give some examples of Clementi's double-note passages, and must emphasise the fact that these patterns as a form of exuberant technical display had not been used in this way before.

The first is from the Toccata, which he added to the famous "Magic Flute" Sonata.

(*Preshissimo*)



The second is from the Presto movement of Op. 2, No. 3, which indulges in immense leaps as well as scale passages, forcing the player to take calculated risks at the same time as the ordinary double third agility.

(*Preshissimo*)



(*PRESTISSIMO*)



No doubt the composer found this a delightfully comic effect—and so it is, once one has taken the plunge! Clementi must have had a most gay and fun-loving temperament, since there are so many examples of these endearing qualities. One phrase which comes to mind here is the subject of the last movement of Op. 39 in D, which is such a delightful parody of a hurdy-gurdy:

Presto

I should like also to show a small example of his skill with canonic imitation, which comes from the same sonata:

(Allegretto vivace.)

We have already spoken of Clementi as a teacher; many famous musicians came to study with him, among them J. B. Cramer, Moscheles and Meyerbeer, and, of course, countless others. When a teacher attracts pupils of this calibre it nearly always means that, as well as his technical attainments, he must have an outstanding personality and rare musical gifts. This surely contradicts the statement that Clementi was "without a pennyworth of feeling or taste"?

In these days, those gatherings of highly gifted pupils would be called "Master Classes," and very odd we would think them, if the central figure was so diminished!

To be perfectly fair, after these stringent criticisms, Clementi always spoke with great admiration of Mozart's superb artistry and *sostenuto* tone and moulded his own style, after studying many famous singers, to a more noble and melodic one, which was also helped by the improved mechanism of English pianos.

Beethoven was a great admirer of Clementi and placed his sonatas in the front rank of works, both for their exact form and for their musical treatment of the pianoforte.

It is amusing to recall that Beethoven insisted when he was training his nephew that the boy should practise Clementi's Sonatas for his daily study and inspiration.

At this time Clementi and his firm were interested in publishing music as well as in making pianos, and so it is even more amusing to recall his plans to make Beethoven's acquaintance and a letter that he wrote to his partners (which gives great insight into his character and sense of humour):

"By a little management, and without committing myself, I have made at last a compleat conquest of that haughty beauty Beethoven; who first began at public places to grin and coquet with me, which of course I took care not to discourage; then slid into familiar chat, till meeting him by chance one day in the street—'Where do you lodge?' says he, 'I have not seen you this long while!' Upon which I gave him my address. Two days after I find on my table his card, brought by himself, from the maid's description of his lovely form. This will do, thought I. Three days after that he calls again and finds me at home. Conceive then the mutual extasy of such a meeting! I took pretty good care to improve it to our house's advantage. Therefore as soon as decency would allow, after praising very handsomely some of his compositions, 'Are you engaged with any publisher in London?' 'No,' says he. 'Suppose then, you prefer me.' 'With all my heart.' 'Done.' 'What have you ready?' 'I'll bring you a list.' In short, I agreed with him to take in MS. three Quartetts, a Symphony, an Overture, a Concerto for the Violin, which is very beautiful, and which, at my request, he will adapt for the Pianoforte with and without additional keys; and a Concerto for the Pianoforte. For all which we are to pay him two hundred pounds sterling . . ."

Vienna, April, 1807.

During the period of which we are speaking, English pianos were considered to be the best, by the performers of the day, and Clementi took an immense interest in the improvement of these instruments. Although all concert pianists up to this time have this passionate interest in their pianos from the actual playing point of view, Clementi went a step further and many of the improvements which took place in the 19th century were due to his genius.

(Clementi was interested during his active professional life in a firm of piano makers, Longman and Broderip. Later he went into partnership with Longman, and when the latter set up in business alone, he became head of a new firm containing, amongst others, F. W. Collard. This firm eventually became known as Clementi & Co., and had a great trade, Clementi's name being a guarantee of a good instrument. After his death the firm became known as Collard & Collard until recently, when they were taken over by Chappell & Co.)

Those who have played on pianos bearing the name Muzio Clementi will recall the vast difference between these instruments and the modern grand piano, from a purely pianistic point of view. Passages such as the following are child's play on the Clementi Piano, with its resilient lightness of touch, in contrast to our contemporary instrument with its comparative slowness of recovery of the key, e.g.,

(*Spiritoso*)



(Presto)*(Allegro assai)*

If the executant's hand is rather small, it increases the difficulty by extra tension required in the muscles of the hand, which in turn adds to the fatigue.

Previously, we were talking about the evenness of touch required to play the early pianos. The Clementi piano had a very even touch, which, providing the player had the requisite equipment, made Clementi's double notes of all kinds gleam like strings of pearls. Today, our modern instruments are so much heavier, and thicker in quality, that to play them, recreating the earlier sound, requires a technique of a slightly different order.

The hand, finding itself in a different balance, must be adjusted with the earlier touch in mind, and the earlier sound in the imagination.

A slightly staccato touch combined with very sensitive pedalling to distribute the harmonics, appears to suggest the delicate but incisive quality of the older instrument.

The very early *Sostenuto* Pianos were more difficult to manage as the touch had a resistance that made the balanced playing of soft chords nearly impossible, as the notes came down one after the other, no matter how hard one tried! Perhaps this influenced the playing of our grandmothers, who always played the left hand before the right!

My own experience on the *Sostenuto* Piano in the Brighton Pavilion suggested this to me in no uncertain way.

However, the balance of the Clementi Piano after this was even and easy in the extreme.

When we speak of the difference in touch between the early piano and the piano of our day, it is interesting to read the following criticism that Clementi gave, when asked for his opinion of an instrument. (It is remarkably similar to that of a virtuoso pianist at the present time, when faced with an inferior piano in circumstances of the same kind!):

"The touch is both a lazy and lousy one—though 'tis thrummed on night and day, it is as disobedient as ever. Some radical fault. Remember a light, well-repeating touch is a grand article in Germany. Pray mind what you send me—I dare not show this one as a bait, for the tone likewise is far from tempting—being as dry as my purse . . ."

All pianists everywhere owe a debt of gratitude to Clementi, both for the range of sound and comfort of our pianos, and for the beautiful, exciting and charming music he left us.

I hope these somewhat rambling excursions, by one who enjoys playing Clementi so much, may amuse those who know him and induce others to enjoy him also.

GEORG BÖHM (1661-1733)

BY

ANGELA EVANS

ONE OF THE few centenaries to be celebrated this year is that of Georg Böhm. He was born on 2nd September, 1661, at Hohenkirchen, near Ohrdruf, in Thuringia, Saxony, where his father, Balthasar Böhm, was schoolmaster and organist. Georg received his earliest education at Ohrdruf's famous Latin School (where Sebastian Bach was later to follow him) and after his father's sudden death in 1675, he continued his learning first at Goldbach, then at the Gymnasium at Gotha, and finally at the University of Jena. He must have felt the urge to see what went on in the world beyond the narrow confines of Thuringia, for in 1693 we find him in Hamburg, then the centre of all that was most progressive in German music. He stayed there until 1698, when he was the successful competitor for the post of organist at the 14th century Johanniskirche at Lüneburg, where he remained until his death in 1733.

These are the bare facts of his life. There is no portrait to re-create his personality for us, but a study of his music reveals an accomplishment from which Bach was glad to learn. Apart from a Passion (now lost) and a few cantatas, chorales and songs, his output consists entirely of keyboard music, in which he fused all his experience into a style which Gerber described in his "Neues historisch-biographisches Lexicon der Tonkünstler" 1812 as "distinguished from his contemporaries by being flowing and pleasing."

What was the state of German music in the later 17th century? To appreciate the world into which Georg Böhm was born in 1661 it is necessary to take a glance both at the geography and history of the country as well as the musical background.

Geographically, Germany falls into three distinct regions. The southern is bounded by the Alps and extends from the plain of Vienna and the Danube valley on the one hand to the valley of the Rhine on the other. Here we find the territories of the Empire and the states of Bavaria, Würtemberg and Baden; and from across the Alps came the influence of Italy, stimulating the cultural life of Vienna, Salzburg, Munich, Nuremberg . . .

Turning to the North, we find the Baltic ports and the avenues of trade and commerce. Into these flowed the animation of the Netherlands and France, Great Britain and Scandinavia.

Between these two Germanies lie the central territories, the rich agricultural lands sheltered by the forests of the Harz Mountains and the Thuringerwald, Silesia, Saxony, Hesse, Westphalia. These central lands became the melting pot where the ideas and technique of the North were transmitted to the South and whence the Italian traditions blended with them to create what Quantz describes in his "Versuch einer Anweisung die Flöte traversiere zu spielen"⁽¹⁾ (1752) as the German "taste": "When we know how to select with due discrimination from the musical tastes of various peoples what is best in each, there arises a mixed taste which, without overstepping the bounds of modesty, may very well be called the German taste."

As far as history is concerned, perhaps no event can ever have had such disastrous effect on the progress and economy of a country as did the Thirty Years' War upon hapless Germany. The civilisation and culture were set back a century, and as the undisciplined armies marched and counter-marched, towns and villages were reduced to ashes and fields lay waste. The remaining population was decimated by disease and famine and in Brandenburg and Silesia the wild animals outnumbered the peasants, who themselves became as savage as the country itself. No wonder Schütz and others who could do so fled.

Why did it happen? Briefly, the fire of religious discontent was fanned by many issues, territorial, dynastic and economic, and the whole conflagration turned out to be a conflict of petty German princes against the unity of the Holy Roman Empire itself. The outcome—the end of the Hapsburg domination of Germany and the development of a united Protestant bloc in the northern part of the country.

Three centres of power emerged, roughly following the geographical divisions. The Catholic Emperor remained master of Vienna and Bavaria. The Elector of Brandenburg, who was to assume the title of King of Prussia in 1701, held the power of the north; while, in the centre, was the Lutheran Elector of Saxony, whose court at Dresden became one of the great centres of culture. In addition to these, there arose some 350 more or less independent States, predominantly Catholic in the south and Protestant in the north and centre, all vying with one another for pomp and show—the *nouveau riche* and the threadbare aristocracy—until we find a Duke of Brunswick actually selling his subjects to foreign powers as soldiers in order to finance his opera!

By some miracle, despite these years of disaster, the spark of

(1) Paragraph 87.

music remained alive and we find the pattern of musical life following very much that of the geography and history; in the south, the Catholic and Italianate elements, Frescobaldi's pupils Kerll and Froberger, the Muffats and the young Pachelbel; in the north, the stronghold of protestantism, the pupils of Sweelinck bringing in the influence of the Netherlands, Scheidemann and Jacob Praetorius, then Reinken the pupil of Scheidemann, Lubeck and Buxtehude, whom Bach was to tramp so many miles to visit. In the centre, the melting pot, home of the many generations of Bachs, we find Scheidt, Weckmann, Walther and Böhm.

What were the characteristics of these three centres of musical life that Böhm was to assimilate into the individual style of keyboard writing which gave Gerber so much pleasure? It is difficult to summarise so large a canvas into a concise paragraph, but perhaps one may safely say that the southern school is represented by toccatas and canzonas, *ricercares* and fantasias, bodily harmonic in texture and rhapsodic in effect; the northern, by chorale paraphrases and variations on a well-organised, contrapuntal plan.⁽²⁾ In the centre, Scheidt began the drawing together of these elements in his "Tabulatura Nova" (1624), in which he abandoned the old German organ tablature in favour of Italian notation. Though the actual content is mainly an extension of the patterned variation technique of the northern school, his monumental work, which even Brahms is said to have "revelled in admiration" of, led the way forward to Pachelbel, who brought about the final fusion of the Catholic and Protestant schools of organ music.

Pachelbel must have had influence over the early studies of Böhm as he was in Thuringia from 1677-1695, first as court organist in Eisenach and then as organist of the Predigerkirche at Erfurt. Having come straight from the Imperial Court at Vienna, he was a person of some consequence. Then in 1693 Böhm arrived in Hamburg for his studies with Reinken. Besides being the leading organist in the city, Reinken was also the founder of the original German opera, which opened in Hamburg in 1678 with Thiel's singspiel "Adam and Eve" and continued with works by J. W. Franck and others, helped by Kusser, a pupil of Lully, until under the direction of Keiser, from 1695 to 1706, it became world-famous. Another widely celebrated institution was the Collegium Musicum, which held regular meetings in the cathedral refectory and at which the latest works of leading local composers were performed before large audiences. In this teeming, cosmopolitan world no talented young musician

(2) An excellent illustration of the differences between the North and South German styles can be found in a comparison of Froberger's and Reinken's "Mayerin" variations.

could fail to benefit. We find Handel pursuing much the same course when he had finished his education ten years later. Journeys to Lübeck to hear Buxtehude must also have occupied him, though as Böhm was already married (three of his children were baptised in Hamburg), he did not aspire to be Buxtehude's successor at the Marienkirche, Lübeck, as were Bach and Handel, who both found the condition of having to marry Buxtehude's 40-year-old daughter too horrifying to make the appointment even worth consideration! (Buxtehude himself had been more fortunate as Tunder's daughter, whom he had to marry in order to take over the post from Tunder, was alleged to be very attractive!)

When Böhm arrived in Lüneburg yet another experience was to have great influence on his work. At nearby Celle lived the reigning Duke of Brunswick-Lüneburg with his French Huguenot wife, Elenore d'Olbreuse. After the revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685, many Huguenots fleeing from persecution gathered at this Court, which became a centre of French culture and, it is said, more French in atmosphere than France itself. Here the harpsichord music of Chambonnières, d'Anglebert, Couperin, Le Roux and the organ music of Titelouze, Marchand, Clerambault and Grigny must have greeted him, with its rhythmic sparkle, delicate ornamentation and idiom all its own.

A study of Böhm's keyboard works shows him to be a far more decorative and imaginative writer than Pachelbel and one more intimate and expressive than Buxtehude. He had a considerable instinct for instrumental style and his works seem full of light and movement. There is very little difference between his harpsichord and organ styles. His three Preludes and Fugues are, however, obviously written for the organ, and here we find the most marked influence of the North German school. The prelude of the first, in C Major, opens with a long pedal passage in the manner of Sweelinck's pupils. The Fugue which follows seems austere at first glance, but the working out is full of spirit and the final roulades look towards the Toccatas of the South. The Prelude and Fugue in A Minor is a sturdy, concise work, and for this Böhm wrote a second, more decorative, fugue with no pedal part, probably intended for the harpsichord. The third Prelude and Fugue in D Minor has again the pedal opening which leads by way of a majestic chordal passage into a first fugue. After being briefly worked, this develops via a toccata-like passage in the dominant, into a second fugue on the same subject, but in 3/4 time, concluding as before in a torrent of arpeggios. Then comes a Prelude in F Major, standing on its own with no fugue and leaning heavily towards the French style with its dotted rhythms; and a lively Capriccio in D Major in what

virtually amounts to three distinct movements. Finest of all and perhaps even the greatest keyboard composition before Bach, is the Prelude, Fugue and Postlude in G Minor. In its harmonic development it looks right forward into the later decades of the 18th century. The dramatic prelude in 3/2 time is composed entirely of broken chords and linked by a six-bar adagio to a splendid fugue. This is followed by the postludium, built entirely of descending sequences of arpeggios and concluding in a rich, chordal adagio reminiscent of the opening.

Ten of the eleven Suites follow the French pattern with basic movements—allemande, courante, sarabande, gigue. The second, in D Major, is, however, entirely different and might be an arrangement of instrumental pieces from a French opera in the manner of d'Anglebert with an overture, air, rigaudon, trio in the relative minor, then rondeau, minuet and chaconne. We must not forget to mention the charming little minuet in G Major which Bach included in his Anna Magdalena Book, or the variations on the aria, "Jesu du bist allzu schone," which reveal admirably Böhm's method of breaking up his melody into tiny phrases.

There remain to be considered the various Chorale workings which can be roughly divided into three main types. First, those that are treated in a simple, contrapuntal fashion without variations, rather in the manner of a fantasia, such as "Allein Gott" and the two settings of "Christ lag in Todesbanden." This latter was to become the direct model of Bach for his first working of the same chorale melody (BWV 718). Then those seemingly intended for Church use, with the variations marked "versus" as opposed to "partita" or "varatio" in the secular sets. (Scheidt uses a somewhat similar method of distinction in his "Tabulatura Nova"). These, generally speaking, appear to be written for the organ and the chorale melody is broken up into decorative phrases which move over a simple, harmonic accompaniment, e.g., the set on "Auf meinen leben Gott." In these works the façade of Baroque counterpoint drops away, revealing a far more harmonically conceived structure than can be found in earlier keyboard music. Perhaps it is this new means of expression that makes Böhm's work stand out as something rather unique. In the secular type the ornamentation of the variations is more pronounced and some of them achieve dance rhythms reminiscent of the Suites, as in "Ach wie nichtig." Another trait which is constantly appearing and reveals the strong influence of French music, is Böhm's fondness for *basso ostinato* motifs and effects.

In addition, there are several sets of variations which seem

to be a synthesis of the foregoing and combine all the otherwise consistent features, as in "Christe der du bist Tag und Licht" and "Freu dich." One can almost imagine Böhm leaping from the harpsichord to the organ and vice-versa for some of the variations! Despite all this, each individual work seems to preserve its unity and design, far removed from the rambling works of Reinken.⁽³⁾

Bach was indeed fortunate to have come under the influence of such an artist during his stay in Lüneburg. Although there is no evidence that he was ever a pupil of Böhm's, there is every reason to suppose that it was the organist's description of the wonders of life in Hamburg and the splendid organ playing of Reinken and the tremendous personality of Buxtehude, which inspired Bach to tramp the many weary miles to hear and meet them. While he was at Lüneburg he copied assiduously the works of Grigny and Dieupart; Fock suggests in his study "Der junge Bach in Lüneburg" that almost all the keyboard works by Böhm which have been preserved may be traced back to copies made by Bach.

One has only to study the early works of Bach beside those of Böhm and to trace their development into his more mature style to realise how far reaching were those years in Lüneburg.

The hand of Böhm obviously lies most heavily on the Chorale Partitas. Here one finds the same spun-out motives, running passages, counter-melodies and *ostinato* basses, gradually becoming less and less clumsy in their working. Then there is the only Chorale Fantasia Bach ever wrote—that on "Christ lag in Todesbanden" BWV 718, which seems to have been modelled directly on Böhm's first setting of the tune. The Prelude and Fugue in C Minor BWV 549 moves off with an elaborate pedal part just in the manner of Böhm's works and the little C Minor Fugue BWV 575 bubbles with his lightness and grace. The Chorale Prelude "Erbarm' dich" BWV 721 has its bass built on a motif of four repeated notes, almost identical with that of Böhm's second setting of "Vater unser." The finger-prints are innumerable, though perhaps none more significant than those in the Adagio section of the Toccata, Adagio and Fugue in C Major BWV 564, where a long, sinous melody winds gently over a bass built entirely on a repeated quaver pattern, giving the effect of pizzicato strings. Here, truly, is the flowing and pleasing effect which captivated Gerber.

(3) There is an excellent gramophone record of some of Böhm's works played by Hans Heintze on his original organ in the Johanniskirche, Lüneburg (Deutsche Grammophon Archive Production APM 14043). This instrument is based on one originally constructed in 1551 by Heindrick Niehoff, a maker from the Netherlands. It was rebuilt under the personal supervision of Böhm himself by Matthias Dropa between 1712 and 1715.

Thus the wheel turns its circle and when we hear the early organ works and the keyboard suites of Bach, it is worth sparing a thought for Georg Böhm, whose lively mind did so much to inspire and encourage them.

LIST OF KEYBOARD MUSIC

The following is a summary of the edition by Gesa Wolgast, published by Breitkopf & Härtel, 1952:—

I. Free compositions for Harpsichord and Organ.

Prelude and Fugue in C Major.
Prelude and Fugue in A Minor.
Prelude in F Major.
Prelude and Fugue in D Minor.
Capriccio in D Major.
Prelude, Fugue and Postlude in G Minor.

II. Harpsichord Suites.

No. 1 in C Minor.
No. 2 in D Major.
No. 3 in D Minor.
No. 4 in D Minor.
No. 5 in E Flat Major (authenticity doubtful).
No. 6 in E Flat Major.
No. 7 in F Major.
No. 8 in F Minor.
No. 9 in F Minor.
No. 10 in G Major.
No. 11 in A Minor.
Minuet in G Major.
Partita on the aria "Jesu du bist allzu schöne."

III. Chorale Variations, etc.

Ach wie nützlich.
Allein Gott in der Höh.
Auf meinen lieben Gott.
Aus tiefer Not.
Christe, der du bist Tag und Licht.
Christ lag in Todesbanden (two settings).
Christum wir sollen loben schon.
Freu dich sehr o meine Seele.
Gelobet seist du (two settings).
Herr Jesu Christ.
Nun bitten wir.
Vater unser (two settings).
Vom Himmel hoch.
Wer nur den lieben Gott.

IV. Supplement.

Second Fugue for Prelude in A Minor.
Chaconne. (Fourth movement for Prelude, Fugue and Postlude) (authenticity doubtful).
Additional variations for first setting of "Vater unser."
Chorale Prelude, "Erhalt uns, Herr, bei deinem Wort."

LIST OF SOURCES

Öffentliche Wissenschaftliche Bibliothek, Berlin

Mus. ms. 22541, Walthers Handschrift.
Christum wir sollen loben schon.
Gelobet seist du (both settings).
Vom Himmel hoch.
Christ lag in Todesbanden II.
Nun bitten wir.
Mus. ms. autograph Bach P 802.

Christe, der du bist Tag und Licht.
Vater unser (both settings).

Westdeutsch Bibliothek, Marburg (formerly in Preussische Staatsbibliothek, Berlin).

Mus. ms. 30381, Handschrift Joh. Rincks.

Prelude and Fugue in C Major.

Prelude and Fugue in A Minor.

Prelude and Second Fugue in A Minor.

Mus. ms. autograph Bach P 225, Klavierbüchlein der Anna Magdalena Bach.

Minuet in G Major.

Universitätsbibliothek, Tübingen (formerly in Preussische Staatsbibliothek, Berlin).

Mus. ms. 40644. "Möllersche Handschrift."

Prelude in F Major.

Prelude and Fugue in D Minor.

Capriccio in D Major.

Suite No. 4 in D Minor.

Suite No. 5 in E Flat Major (authenticity doubtful).

Suite No. 7 in F Major.

Suite No. 8 in F Minor.

Suite No. 9 in F Minor.

Suite No. 10 in G Major.

Partita on "Jesu du bist allzu schöne."

Former Hochschule für Musik, Charlottenburg.

Christ lag in Todenbanden I.

Former Akademie für Kirchen—und Schulmusik, Charlottenburg.

Prelude, Fugue and Postlude in G Minor.

Chaconne in G Minor. (Possible fourth mvt. for above of doubtful authenticity.)

Universitätsbibliothek, Königsberg.

Ms. 15839, Walther-Handschrift.

Ach wie nichtig.

Allein Gott in der Höh.

Auf meinen lieben Gott.

Freu dich sehr.

Wer nur den lieben Gott.

Vater unser I. (versus I only).

Gemeente-Museum, The Hague.

4.G.14. "Frankenberger Handschrift."

Aus tiefer Not.

Herr Jesu Christ.

Vater unser I. (versus 1 and 2).

Erhalt uns, Herr.

Staats—und Universitätsbibliothek, Hamburg.

Cod. Mus. ND VI 3197.

Suite No. 3 in D Minor.

Suite No. 11 in A Minor.

Stadtbibliothek, Leipzig.

Ms. III 8. 4. "Andreas Bach-Buch."

Prelude, Fugue and Postlude in G Minor.

Suite No. 1 in C Minor.

Suite No. 2 in D Major.

Suite No. 6 in E Flat Major.

MODERN MUSIC FOR THE CLAVICHORD

BY

MICHAEL THOMAS

THE SUGGESTION that the contemporary repertoire for the clavichord should be extended was first put to me by Dr. Roger Fiske at the B.B.C. after a broadcast I had given on the technique of playing the early keyboard instruments. Dr. Fiske very kindly went to the trouble of approaching several composers about writing new music for the clavichord. One of the difficulties was that very few composers knew much about the clavichord and so could not appreciate its potential range of expression. I therefore collected together a number of instruments (including Dorothy Swainson's Dolmetsch-Gaveau) and lent these to composers so that they could explore the clavichord's possibilities for modern music.

The musical periods during which the clavichord was used in the past have much in common with certain aspects of modern music. Many Elizabethan virginal pieces were based on popular songs and dances in the way that modern composers (e.g., Bartok in his Rumanian Christmas Songs) have used national music. Elizabethan music often has blocks of chords as though a guitar was being strummed, and in *Dr. Bull's Juell* we get answering phrases in different keys (C major and B flat major), giving the effect of a distant echo.

Perhaps the most significant texture in old music was the so-called "broken style," which was a way of assigning to the keyboard an idiom which had originated on the lute. Music in the broken style looks as though it is part writing, but each part is heard individually. (*Ex. 1.*) One can therefore hear the melodic implication of every note, and it is these melodic stresses that seem to cause the rise and fall of the parts and the shape of the piece of music as a whole.

The clavichord is the ideal instrument on which to play music of such sensitive texture. A leading note can be played with plenty of attack and a fast restless vibrato. On the other hand a slow lingering note can be played with very little attack and the sound appears to come from nowhere after the note has been played. Such a note can increase in intensity as a slow vibrato becomes faster and finally, at the last moment, it can fall away and die on a lower note. It is, of course, this quality of the clavichord, whereby some of the notes sing, and others are just touched, that give it its extraordinarily clear and precise phrasing.

When one plays music, old music especially, on the clavichord or harpsichord, one can often relate the rise and fall of the notes, or the tensions in the harmony, to some natural rhythm found in nature. The rhythm of the music must have an analogy with some physical process; the waves of the sea, the rhythm of people dancing or the swooping, soaring and gliding of a dove. Mozart was said to have found the action of billiards balls bouncing together stimulating to his sense of rhythm. Furthermore, the rhythm must always flow at a speed which would seem natural in everyday life.

Today we have new kinds of motion, unknown to the old composers, from which to draw our musical shapes, and new conceptions of the speed at which things can happen. The old composers only knew the physical progress of material from place A to place B. Nowadays a reaction at B and perhaps thousands of miles away, may occur at the same time through wireless waves. We can have two forces, both full of energy and movement, quite unconnected and yet affecting each other through action and reaction. This power of two apparently unconnected forces to affect each other has yet to be fully exploited in music, but sudden transitions and echoes from one key to another suggest an awareness of them. Perhaps the most significant thinking on shape and form at the present time is the building up of a whole piece from a tiny fragment by repeating some bizarre piece of rhythm or melody until it has a hypnotic effect, like the endless army trucks in the film "Waterloo Bridge."

After the texture and motion of the earlier music (up to Mozart), the clavichord was useless for the huge blocks of sound needed by Beethoven, or for the appassionate movements of Chopin. During this period music was more concerned with the transition from one emotion to another. With Brahms music began to come back more into the classical metric cycles of dancing (upbeat, downbeat, sidebeat).

With Debussy and Ravel the old types of dance were to return even for slow sad music (e.g., *Pavane pour une infante défunte*; Forlane from *Le Tombeau de Couperin*). With the return of the clarity of rhythm came a return to the clarity of texture and sensitive melodic writing. I remember Dorothy Swainson saying that she (or a friend?) played some of Debussy's preludes to him on the clavichord and he exclaimed: "Why not? It's a wonderful medium for them."

Debussy has a link with Couperin in that Couperin wrote progressions and resolutions (e.g., in the *Passacaglia* in B minor)

where the progressions never really form classical chords. Rameau wrote progressions (e.g., *L'Enharmonique*) in which major and minor chords almost mingle. To these developments that were taking place in the eighteenth century the eclectic modern composer has added pentatonic scales, whole tone scales, modal harmonies, enharmonic scales, many national rhythms, and oriental textures. In the early years of this century the stage was being set for a continuation of an earlier type of music. The instruments, too, began to change. A large amount of chamber music for wind instruments was written. Later, film and television writers used the harmonica, percussion instruments and the guitar, yet there was still little interest in the clavichord.

The harpsichord has fared a little better, but it is often used in this scientific age, which has little conviction, as a brilliant unemotional instrument. In former times the harpsichord was, in all probability, played with the same sensitivity to rise and fall, the same lingering accents, as the clavichord, but today it is used all too often for its shortcomings.

Among the first modern music written for the clavichord was a collection entitled "*Lambert's Clavichord*" by Herbert Howells (1927). These pieces are strongly contrasted and range from quick dances such as "*Hughes Ballet*" and "*Sargent's Fantastic Sprite*" to the slow and beautiful, partly modal, harmony of "*Wortham's Grounde*" and "*H.H. his Fancy*." In particular I like "*De La Mare's Pavane*," which reminds me of Dowland.*

More recently some small books of clavichord music (published by Stainer & Bell) have been composed by Haward Clarke. One book is based on Armenian songs. These are attractive pieces, but they are examples of the modern practice of exploiting a particular rhythm, or fragment, of scale or melody, for a whole piece. Thus No. 2 is based on harmonies of consecutive fifths, Nos. 3 and 6 on the notes of the harmonic minor scale played as a melody, while another is based on the notes of the Dorian mode (A E F sharp).

A number of young modern composers have been writing pieces for the clavichord that are pastiches, but the clavichord should not be a backwater for precious little pieces. It is the most sensitive, expressive, and indeed the most precise of all keyboard instruments, and the one for which the "48" was written.

Much Elizabethan and eighteenth century keyboard music was written for entertainment at court or in the drawing room,

* A second set, entitled "*Howell's Clavichord*," appeared in 1951.

but the Elizabethan court (or house) was the centre of English Renaissance society, as was the eighteenth century salon. Music was an essential accomplishment in a society where the cultivation of every side of man's nature was considered necessary to a complete individual.

Today the growing point of our civilisation is no longer in the house, and no longer with the gentleman amateur. It is with the physicist and mathematician, and it is the philosopher who equates the new evidence. The new composer should concern himself with these sciences. It is no use his turning back to a serener age for inspiration. He must work out his own style, which should be alive to the rhythms of the "steam combustion engine" (as Eliot says of poetry), and not only the engine, but the particles of the quantum theory, the endless space. The fortuitous and irregular dance of atoms seem to be inherent in some textures of Stravinsky, while the straight lines of infinite distance appear to be represented by the long repeated patterns so common in modern music, especially programme music. (*Ex. 2.*)

The half-formed ideas which come as a result of our present state of uncertainty, our absence of any real belief or moral code that can stand up to the light of modern empirical science, is a challenge for man to find new ideals. I feel that the actual thought and feeling behind a work is more important than the texture. Old music, if played correctly, becomes expressive. Modern music should also be expressive and it should lead to a state of mind in which man can accept his modern environment.

It cannot be claimed that more than a start has been made to relate modern clavichord music with the central points of modern thinking, but a step has been taken in the right direction.

The first modern work for clavichord that I received was a suite by Robert Still. It is in three movements, but these are really a unit as in many a modern symphony. The style is close to the "broken style," with the voices, often in different keys, dovetailing into each other through syncopations. Modern patterns are exemplified into the middle movement, where the parts collide in semitones and resolve. (*Ex. 3.*)

The second new work was an Adagio for two clavichords by Anthony Scott. At first it appears to be programme music with great atmosphere, and is, indeed, based on earlier programme music about a lonely priest. The entry chords, which resemble a great cathedral, act as pedal notes above and below a chanting theme, resulting in strange and beautiful harmonies. The final section seems to grow from all the material and therefore gives a sense of both structural and emotional achievement.

It is appropriate to mention here Edmund Rubbra's Introduction, Aria and Fugue, written principally for a big harpsichord with stops ranging from 16ft. to a 2ft. stop. It begins with big chords and arpeggios related to each other by the interval of a minor third, which gives an effect of sombre intensity. The Aria is based on cross rhythms of twos and threes and leads to the Fugue. This has a strong rhythm which is maintained throughout, like the fugues of Bach. The power of this fugue (*Ex. 4*) comes from the sudden changes (enharmonic) of keys similar to the powerful changes in the introduction.

A Fugue by Anthony Scott for clavichord again accepts the fugal texture for the instrument. The subjects are not based on a settled rhythm, but on restless driving phrases. (*Ex. 5*.) When the exposition is over the subject is harmonised with interesting new textures and thereafter develops symphonically.

The Prelude for clavichord by Lennox Berkeley is based on exquisite colour with many chromatic notes introduced into the key and a duality, first found in Rameau, between the major and minor thirds. The Fugue which follows (*Ex. 6*) again uses the old texture, with superb part writing, to express a complicated emotion, the conflict between the major and minor thirds being resolved in the last note.

Conflict between the chords is not expressed in the Forlane of Sir Eugene Goossens' Forlane and Toccata. Instead, rather strange and opposing chords are mingled to give new colours. Thus the major and minor thirds are often used together. As in Ravel's Forlane, it is an example of the slow dance being used to express a sad lingering feeling. The texture of the Toccata is an example of spread chords, as on an early lute. Here distinctly related chords, sometimes a minor third apart, are built up to form one chord in such a way that one harmony dissolves into another, as contrasting colours blend and dissolve as on a screen. (*Ex. 7*.) The second passage quoted shows the construction of chords from 3rds, 4ths and 5ths in consecutive bars. The third passage (*Ex. 2*) shows the long repeated fast pattern that seems to have some relationship to modern ideas of space.

Among pieces not yet publicly performed are two utilising serial technique by the Liverpool composer, Thomas Wess. The style of the broken chords is a particularly good medium for sequences of chromatic melodies.

At the moment Edmund Rubbra is writing a second piece—a Toccata and Fugue, and Peter Crossley-Holland is writing a Rhapsody based on Irish pipe music suggesting seal calls. The clavichord can do the quarter tone intervals contained in seal

songs. Cyril Scott has rewritten one of his Pastorals for the clavichord, and I am in contact with a number of other composers.

I hope a start has been made to put the clavichord back as an instrument for the contemporary composer, writing in his own idiom, and that this highly expressive instrument may one day be the indispensable companion of the modern composer, as it once was to the great composers of the past.

Ex 1

Ex 2 *Presto*

Ex 3

Ex 4

Ex 5 *Andante*

Ex 6

Ex 7

Ex 7 No. 2

THE CONSORT

JOURNAL OF THE DOLMETSCH FOUNDATION

Editorial Address : Fonthill, Hurtmore, Godalming, Surrey.

Contributors to *The Consort* are free to express their own views. These do not necessarily coincide with those of the editor or proprietors. The editor reserves the right, when necessary, to amend accepted contributions in order that they should conform to the standards of *The Consort*. He cannot undertake to publish accepted contributions in any specified issue.

Distribution: *The Consort* is obtainable from Mrs. Adrian Evans, Greenstead, Beacon Hill, Hindhead, Surrey; price 5s., or 5s. 6d. by post. Members of The Dolmetsch Foundation automatically receive a free copy. Back numbers are available, with the exception of Nos. 1, 2, 4, 7 and 8. Nos. 3, 5 and 6 are priced at 2s. 6d.; Nos. 9 through 15 at 3s. 6d.; Nos. 16 and 17 at 5s. Postage extra.

